



UBEROI FOUNDATION
for RELIGIOUS STUDIES
INSTITUTE FOR CURRICULUM ADVANCEMENT

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To: Instructional Quality Commission
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

January 5, 2016

Re: Edits to the Draft Narrative posted December 17, 2015

We have carefully reviewed the Draft Narrative that was sent out for the second 60-day review and herein offer the enclosed 28 edits in response. We have also consulted with our newly formed board of Academic Advisors and Consultants (listed at left).

We regard these 26 edits as a “for the record” list of our remaining issues with the Framework Narrative. These embody the specific concerns of the Uberoi Foundation Institute for Curriculum Advancement. Other Hindu groups and individuals may have additional and equally valid concerns.

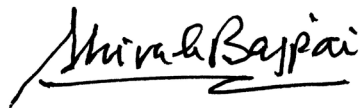
Our edits are offered to correct factual inaccuracies, failure to accommodate differing opinions on historical issues (specifically on the presence of Indo-European language in India) and brazenly biased characterizations of Indian society. Additionally, we offer responses to the request from the IQC to 1) include famous Hindu women saints and 2) historical efforts to address inequities in the jati system, plus 3) a few additions that will more faithfully represent Hindu thought.

Half of the edits deal with the varna/jati system and patriarchy which, as presently given in the narrative, constitute a clear example of adverse reflection against Hinduism due to the failure to address similar known social inequities and patriarchy in Judaism, Christianity or Islam.

We urge the IQC to take to heart the spirit of the California State Constitution and Education code as well as the Board of Education’s own Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Material and Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content, reproduced below. We are convinced that the Narrative has not yet met the legal

standard that “No religious group may be portrayed as inferior.” Nor has it succeeded with the goal to “instill in each child a sense of pride in his or her heritage,” as testified to repeatedly by the Hindu children who shared their experiences at earlier hearings.

With respect,



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California's Legal Guidelines

The state education code, section 51501, forbids any classroom material or activity “which reflects adversely upon persons because of their race, sex, color, creed, handicap, national origin or ancestry” and section 51500 states, “A teacher shall not give instruction and a school district shall not sponsor any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation...”

The CSBE's Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials requires that history instruction must be “based on the best recent scholarship” and that “materials on religious subject matter remain neutral; do not advocate one religion over another; do not include derogatory language about a religion or use examples from sacred texts or other religious literature that are derogatory, accusatory, or instill prejudice against other religions or those who believe in other religions.”

The CSBE's Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content are intended to “enable all students to become aware and accepting of religious diversity while being allowed to remain secure in any religious beliefs they may already have.” They forbid “adverse reflection” against a religion or religious belief, and state, “No religious belief or practice may be held up to ridicule and no religious group may be portrayed as inferior.”

A second category in the Social Content Standards also applies to the treatment of Hinduism and Indian history, that of “Ethnic and Cultural Groups.” According to a 2014 report by the Center for American Progress, 635,000 Asian Indians live in California. The Social Content Standards for religion only require a student to remain “secure” in their religious belief and not be ridiculed; the ethnic and cultural standard sets a higher objective: “instill in each child a sense of pride in his or her heritage.”